



# DENIM DAY

**STEP FORWARD**

TAKE A STAND AGAINST RAPE

## Denim Day Background

In 1992, an 18-year old in Italy was picked up by her driving instructor to begin a driving lesson. Soon after, she was raped on the side of the road by the instructor. She pressed charges and won her case. The instructor appealed, and the case went to the Italian High Court. In 1999 the Court overturned the conviction with a member of the High Court declaring that since the victim wore very tight jeans, the instructor could not have removed them himself, therefore the victim must have willingly participated. Women of the Italian Legislature protested the decision by wearing jeans. As news of the decision spread, so did the protest. In April 1999 the state of California established the first Denim Day in the United States.

In 2006, Missouri's Injury and Violence Prevention Program invited the Missouri Office on Women's Health to collaborate on plans for Denim Day. Through this collaboration Denim Day was held at the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and Lincoln University in Jefferson City and at the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU).

In 2007, the Office on Women's Health asked the Textile and Apparel Management Department at MU to design a logo for a Denim Day lapel pin. The department went above and beyond the call. Students in the computer assisted design class each designed a lapel pin and a panel was assembled to vote on the designs.

Another MU Textile and Apparel Management class developed a message to brand Denim Day. They printed posters, flyers, and bookmarks. Denim bags were designed and sewn by students and donated to the University Hospital Emergency Department for rape victims. These bags were filled with flip-flops, t-shirts, drawstring pants (sewn by the Restorative Justice Program, Missouri Department of Corrections), and personal care items donated from various businesses.

Students in the MU Textile and Management Association collaborated with Stephens College, Columbia College, and William Woods University to sponsor events on their campuses in Columbia on April 26 in addition to events planned at Lincoln University and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. The Governor of Missouri signed a Proclamation designating April 26, 2007 as Denim Day in Missouri.

The Injury and Violence Prevention Program, as part of its federal contract, is expanding the Denim Day Project to additional college campuses, one in each region of the state.

The goal of this effort is to make the Denim Day pin a national symbol for the prevention of rape and violence against women. Your help is needed to accomplish this goal. This toolkit is designed to assist your state or territory in the implementation of Denim Day. Missouri is dedicated to establishing an integrated national initiative for Denim Day and rape education and awareness. With your support, there will be a unified message that there is no excuse and never an invitation to rape.